

Amendments to the claims:

Sub C1
1. (currently amended) A computerized method for processing administrative data of a medical service provider including ~~billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data~~, comprising the steps of:

defining standard administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system, a coordinator system, and a plurality of medical practice management agent systems, in creating and processing administrative data, said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data;

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creating ~~neutral~~ objective evaluation data for said coordinator system by tracking administrative data transferred between said medical service provider system and said medical practice management agent systems, wherein said administrative data is in said standard administrative data formats, said ~~neutral~~ objective evaluation data including price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, ~~[[amd]]~~ and customer service information; and

providing said ~~neutral~~ objective evaluation data to said medical service provider system for selection of a medical practice management agent system from a plurality of said medical practice management agent systems.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said medical service provider system for generating said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

3. original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said practice management agent systems for processing said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of registering with said

coordinator system said selection of said practice management agent system by said medical service provider system.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

evaluating security data provided to said coordinator system by said practice management agent system for accessing said administrative data of said medical service provider; and

authorizing said access to said administrative data for said practice management agent system by said coordinator system.

6. (original) An agent-neutral computerized system for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising:

means for defining administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system and practice management agent systems in creating and processing administrative data;

means for creating agent-neutral evaluation data in said coordinator system by tracking administrative data transactions transferred between said medical service provider system and said practice management agent systems;

means for obtaining additional agent-neutral evaluation data for utilization by said medical service provider; and

means for providing said agent-neutral evaluation data to said medical service provider for selection of a practice management agent system from a plurality of practice management agent systems

7. (currently amended) A system for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising:

a coordinator system for standardizing administrative data formats for processing administrative data of a medical service provider system by a first practice management agent system, said coordinator system providing data access authorization and security for said administrative data of said medical service provider system to said first practice management agent system, and for providing evaluation data from said first practice management agent system for evaluation by said medical service provider system; and

wherein said standardized [[said]] administrative data format substantially eliminates costs incurred by said medical service provider system for switching from said first practice management agent system to a second practice management agent system; and

wherein said administrative data includes billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data.

8. (original) The system in claim 7 wherein administrative services provided by said practice management agency system to said medical service provider system includes a billing process, a reimbursement process, a credentialing process, a pre-authorization process, and a collection process.

9. (original) The system in claim 7 wherein said administrative data provided by said medical service provider system to said practice management agency system includes billing data, reimbursement data, credentialing data, pre-authorization data, and collection data.

10. (original) The system in claim 7, wherein said standard data format includes coordinator-set operational standards and computer system interface standards.

11. (original) The system in claim 7, wherein said evaluation of said first practice management agent system's effectiveness includes evaluation of price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, and customer service relating to said first practice management agent system.

12. (currently amended) A method for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising the steps of:

standardizing operational procedures and system communication between a medical service provider and a plurality of medical practice management agents which provide administrative services to said medical service provider;

creating a predetermined data format for standardizing administrative data relating to billing and reimbursement of a medical service provider, said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data;

providing a medical service provider system capable of generating said administrative data of said medical service provider in said predetermined format;

providing a coordinator system for defining said predetermined format for transmission of said administrative data between said medical service provider system and a first medical practice management agent system;

protecting communication of said administrative data between said medical service provider system and said first medical practice management agent system by providing data access authorization and security to said administrative data by said coordinator system;

generating an analysis of said practice management's agents' effectiveness from coordinator system administrative data to aid said medical service provider in evaluating and selecting said medical practice management agent system;

obtaining said predetermined format administrative data from said coordinator system for providing administrative services from said first medical practice management agent to said medical service provider; and

substantially eliminating costs incurred by said medical service provider system for switching from said first medical practice management agent system to said second medical practice management agent by use of said predetermined format

administrative data by said plurality of said medical practice management agent systems.

13. (original) The method for providing administrative services for a medical service provider of claim 12, wherein said medical service provider system costs which are substantially eliminated include:

costs for changing computer systems for administrative data entry and data transmission;

costs for reformatting administrative data which was entered in a format for a first practice management agent system prior to switching to a second practice management agent system;

costs for retraining personnel to conform with administrative procedures and computer operating methods of said second practice management agent system; and

costs of performing business wherein said agent-neutral coordinator system acts as a mediator to resolve minor issues and disputes between the medical service provider system and the practice management agent systems.

14. (currently amended) An Internet-based system for selecting a medical practice management agent system for providing administrative services to a medical service provider system, comprising:

a server computer hosting a medical practice management agent selection service accessible via client computers to a medical service provider;

wherein the server computer provides a user interface comprising input controls whereby said medical service provider system selects criteria and a display whereby results are displayed, the input controls including a set of menu items including entering medical practice management search criteria, submitting search criteria to a coordinator system, analyze and display neutral objective evaluation data, and select medical practice management agent system, said neutral objective evaluation data created through the tracking of administrative data transferred between medical service providers and said medical practice management agent system, said administrative data including said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing,

preauthorization and collection data, said objective evaluation data including price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, and customer service information; and

whereby said selection service is available via the Internet to assist a medical service provider system in selecting a medical practice management agent system from a plurality of medical practice management agent systems.

B. 15. (currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium containing computer executable code for instructing a computer to operate as follows:

defining standard administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system, a coordinator system, and a plurality of medical practice management agent systems, in creating and processing administrative data, said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data;

creating ~~neutral~~ objective evaluation data for said coordinator system by tracking administrative data transferred between said medical service provider system and said practice management agent systems, wherein said administrative data is in said standard administrative data formats, said objective evaluation data including price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, and customer service information; and

providing said ~~neutral~~ objective evaluation data to said medical service provider system for selection of a medical practice management agent system from a plurality of medical practice management agent systems.